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ABSTRACT

A problem-oriented history of education in postcolonial India is presented along with a forecast of India's educational future. The problems of providing quality education in India after 190 years of British rule, which left only 13 percent of the Indian population literate at the time of India's independence in 1947, are discussed. India's postcolonial attempts at modernizing its educational process through successive five-year plans of development are reviewed. Two aims of educational development are specified: to broaden access to education and to develop a national system of education which is rooted in the basic values of the Indian nation. A background history on India is provided which discusses the positive and negative aspects of British educational administration in India, the four Five-Year Plans and the three annual plans, the Kothari Commission Report and its recommendations, and postcolonial development of facilities at each educational level. Educational failures of the Indian government are reviewed. Most failures have been due to financial problems. The recent Five-Year Plan appears to be avoiding many of the failures of the past plans. References are included. (Author/DB)

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EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST-COLONIAL PERIOD IN INDIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST-COLONIAL PERIOD IN INDIA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

You have to excuse me if I am unable to do full justice to the topic of my presentation on "Educational Development in the Post-Colonial Period in India : Problems and Prospects", due to the limitations imposed by the time at my disposal. My task has become even more difficult by the fact that I cannot go straight to the subject without giving you, by way of background information, some facts and figures about the country of which I am speaking.

India, also known as Bharat, is the seventh largest and second most populous country in the world[1]. It has an area of 1,261,817 sq. miles and a population of not less than 600 million at the present time[2]. On a rough calculation, you will notice that while India is only one-third the size of Canada, its population is about 27 times that of Canada. Lying entirely in the northern hemisphere, the mainland of India extends from latitude 8° to 37° North and from longitude 68° to 97° East, that is to say, from the hottest tropical regions to far within the temperate zone. The country comprises three well-defined regions, namely, the great Himalayan mountain zone, the Indo-Gangetic plain and the Southern peninsula[3].

The Indian year may be divided into four seasons, namely, (i) the cold season from December to February, (ii) the hot season from March to May, (iii) the rainy (or South-West Monsoon) season from June to September, and

(iv) the retreating (or North-East) Monsoon period including the months of October and November[4]. The temperature is nearly constant in Southern India the whole year round, the monthly average being 26° to 28° Celsius or 79° to 82° Fahrenheit, but in northern India the variation is very large, with temperatures as low as 30° Fahrenheit in January to as high as 120° Fahrenheit in May, in certain places.

India's 600 million inhabitants comprise an enormous variety of distinct racial and ethnic types. From time immemorial, elements of four major racial groups, the Europoid, the Mongoloid, the Veddoid, and the Negroid, have met and merged in various combinations[5]. Corresponding to this complexity of the racial composition is the wealth of different cultural patterns. About 22 per cent or 132 million of the population comes under the category of scheduled castes and tribes and these people form the weakest section of the total population, socially, politically, economically and in many other respects[6].

Language has always been an index of cultural and social groupings, and since India became independent in 1947, linguistic distinctions have assumed great political importance. The latest census in 1971 (which, incidently, marked the completion of 100 years of decennial census-taking in India) listed not less than 1,652 mother tongues grouped into 826 languages and dialects[7]. The four major language groups represented in India are the Indo-Aryan, the Dravidian, the Tibeto-Burman, and the Munda. The 8th schedule of the Constitution of India which came into force on January 26,1950, lists 14 major national languages[8]. The Official Languages bill was passed in the Indian Parliament in 1968 making Hindi the official language of India and retaining English as an alternative official or "link" language[9]. (I may add here that although India ranks third among the English knowing countries of the world

- next to the United States of America and the United Kingdom - that language is understood by only four or five per cent of the total population of India). Similarly, though Hindi is the main official or link language of the country from 1968, it is spoken by not more than 40 per cent of the population of India. The remaining 60 per cent of the population speaks mainly one or other of the remaining thirteen languages listed in the 8th schedule of the constitution of the country.

It is a well known fact that India has had one of the world's most creative religious and philosophical developments. Among the religions that originated in India are Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and a number of other lesser-known faiths. In addition, India has received three great religions of Semitic origin, namely, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Also, India has most of the world's practising Zoroastrians or Parsis as they are known locally[10]. Although about 83 per cent (that is, nearly 500 million) of the population are adherents of Hinduism, according to the Constitution of the country, India is a secular democracy with no official state religion. Over 11 per cent (or more than 66 million) people are Muslims, the largest religious minority. Next in number comes Christians, comprising not less that 15 million or $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the population, followed by sikhs with about 11 million adherents[11].

80 per cent of the people of India live in villages and remaining 20 per cent in cities and towns[12]. During the past half century there has been a slow but steady shift towards urbanization in India as in most other countries of the world. The density of population for the country as a whole is 178 per square kilometer. The percentage of workers to the total population is only 33 per cent. 72 per cent of the people in the work force are engaged in

agricultural and other related occupations[13].

There has been a steady, though slow, increase in life expectancy during the successive decades during this century and an accelerated increase during the past fifteen years. The average life expectancy which was 32 years in 1950 had increased to 56 years by 1971. (You may recall that the average life expectancy in Canada is 72 years or so). According to the 1971 census India has a very young age structure; nearly 59 per cent of the population is below twenty five years of age. Another demographic fact worth noting is that the sex ratio of the population has been generally adverse to females, comprising only 93 females to every 100 males[14].

Although the history of India is a very fascinating subject to deal with, in the present context, for obvious reasons, I shall skip it altogether except for a passing remark that India and China have the oldest continuous cultural traditions in the world, dating back to at least 5,000 years in the case of India[15]. India's great achievements in Religion, Literature, Art, and Mathematics in antiquity are facts well known to those who have read history. Its remarkably rich heritage and unique civilization has been enriched in every field by the advent and interningling with the native peoples, of Persians, Greeks, Parthians, Bactrians, Scythians, Huns, Turks, Jews, Zoroastrians, and finally the Europeans, among whom the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British deserve special mention.

The British rule in India lasted for 190 years, beginning with the defeat of Siraj-ud-Daula, the nawab of Bengal, at the battle of Plassey in 1757 and ending with India gaining independence by peaceful means on August 15, 1947. The Constitution of India was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on

November 26, 1949 and came into force on January 26, 1950[16]. Since that date India has been a Sovereign Democratic Republic with a parliamentary form of Government based on universal, adult franchise. In the last general election held in March 1971 there was an electorate of 275 million people of 21 years or older. Sovereignty ultimately rests with the people and the executive authority is accountable for all its decisions and actions to the people through their elected representatives in the legislatures[17].

The Government of the country consists of the Union Government and the Governments of twenty-one States and nine Union Territories. The allocation of subjects between the Union and the States is clearly indicated in the Constitution. The legislature of the Union, which is called the Parliament, consists of the President and two Houses known as the Council of States (or Rajya Sabha) and House of the People (or Lok Sabha). The Union Executive consists of the President, the Vice-President and the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister[18]. The system of government in the States closely resembles that of the Union; the State Executive consists of the Governor and the Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister as its head[19].

Education in India is primarily the concern of the State Governments but the Union Government has several direct responsibilities in the field, some of which are specified in the Constitution and others are only implied. It is directly responsible for the running of five Central Universities and other similar institutions of Higher Studies and Research. The Union Government and the State Governments are equally responsible for the vocational and technical training of labour. A special responsibility of the Union Government is the promotion of the education and welfare of the weaker sections of the population referred to earlier as scheduled castes and tribes[20].

The obligations of the Union Government in Education are discharged through several of its autonomous, attached, and subordinate Organizations such as the University Grants Commission, the National Council of Educational Research and Training and the Central Hindi Directorate. A number of advisory bodies like the Central Advisory Board of Education help the Union Education Ministry in formulating and carrying out its policies and programmes[21].

Ladies and Gentlemen, the reasons for devoting so much time for providing all this background information, I do hope, will become obvious to you as we proceed to develop the core our theme. But before one can deal with the post-colonial period of Educational development in India, it is not possible to avoid altogether, a brief reference to its past history. In the following sketchy overview I shall not dwell upon the contributions of Brahmanic, Buddhist, on Muslim systems of Education India had developed during the course many centuries. I shall content myself by merely stating that at no period of its long history has India been an unenlightened country. Inscriptions on stone and copper, the palm-leaf records of the temples, and later, the manufacture of paper, all indicate not only the general knowledge but also the common use, of the art of writing. As F.W. Thomas, a distinguuished British Indologist remarks, "education is no exotic in India. There is no country where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and poweful an influence"[22].

The history of education in modern India opens perhaps with the debate in 1792 in the British House of Commons over the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company. Here, as in many other spheres, like the abolition of slave trade, William Wilberforce, that great Evangelist, was the pioneer, and

sponsored a resolution that with a view to the advancement of useful knowledge of the inhabitants of British India, the Court of Directors of the East India Company should be directed to send out school masters from time to time. Wilberforce's move, however, was vigorously opposed and one of the Directors observed that, "They had just lost America from the folly of having allowed the establishment of Schools and Colleges and it would not do for them to repeat the same act of folly to India". The question of educating Indians was, therefore, shelved[23].

Britain, however, has never lacked individual administrators and publicists who carried, through the generations, the touch of the progressive liberal tradition. One of them was Lord Macaulay who, for a time, was Law Member of the Government of India. He recorded a Minute which has become famous in the annals of education in India. His ideas were expressed in the British House of Commons in the following words: "Are we to keep the people of India ignorant in order that we may keep them submissive? ... It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system until it has outgrown that system, that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government, that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may in some future age demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come, I know not. Whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history. The sceptre may pass away form us. Victory may be inconstant in our arms. But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverses. There is an empire exempt from all natural causes of decay"[24].

Unfortunately, the noble ideals of Macaulay were not adequately translated into action. When, in 1910, the great Indian Educationist

Gopal Krishna Gokhale, moved in the Imperial Legislative Council a resolution recommending "that a beginning should be made in the direction of making elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country and that a Commission of officials and non-officials be appointed at an early date to frame definite proposals", there was little support for the Resolution and consequently it had to be withdrawn. Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill introduced in 1911 met with the same negative fate. It is no wonder that, therefore, when India became politically independent in 1947, much spadework which could have been done leisurely over decades, had been neglected and valuable time had been lost. Under such adverse circumstances, it may not come as a surprise to you to hear that when India became independent in 1947 only 13 per cent of its population was literate[25].

According to Syed Nurullah and J. P. Naik, two of the must authoritative and objective historians of Indian education, the principal charge against British educational administration in India is that "it failed to create a national system of education for the country"[26].

But before dealing with this failure, I would like to list some of the positive achievements of British educational administration in India as analysed and recorded by the same historians. Among these are:

1. Introduction of India to English language and literature and through them, to all the thought, the scientific and industrial development, and the social and political philosophy of the West.
2. The scientific and critical study of India's ancient culture by European scholars who were brought to the scene by British contact.

3. The impetus given to the development of modern Indian languages.
4. Rediscovery and preservation of Indian painting, architecture, sculpture and ancient monuments.
5. The awakening of several humanistic trends in modern Indian life such as the crusade against untouchability, the emancipation of modern Indian women, and the spirit of social service.
6. Acquainting the Indians with the modern democratic institutions of Europe, the Western systems of Law and Medicine and the auxiliary tools of popular education such as the press, the cinema, the radio, the library, and the museum[27].

Creditable as these achievements really are, they cannot exonerate the Imperial Power that ruled India for nearly two centuries from their failure to create a national system of education for the country. From the detailed and well-reasoned analysis given by Nurullah and Naik the following main points emerge as the reasons for this failure:

1. Failure to realize the place of India in the comity of Nations.
2. Failure to evolve a synthesis of East and West.
3. Inadequate aims.
4. Adoption of wrong methods.
5. Failure to develop India socially, politically and economically.
6. Failure to secure the necessary personnel.
7. Absence of a Plan[28].

Ladies and Gentleman, I gave you this very sketchy overview of the colonial period of education in India not with a view to criticize the British Rule in India, but only because it was found essential, in assessing the achievements and shortcomings of the Government of independent India, to indicate clearly the legacy with which the new Government was saddled.

I said a while ago that when India became free from colonial rule only 13 per cent of its population was literate. A new era in the history of education as well as in other fields was ushered in by the advent of Independence in 1947. From then on, the very scale and perspective of problems became different, although the administrative experience of the past provided some basis for immediate action.

One of the first acts of the independent India was to give a new Constitution to itself. As mentioned earlier this important document was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949, and came into force on January 26, 1950. A number of important provisions which has a direct or indirect bearing on education has been included in this basic document. It enjoins upon the people of India to secure for all their fellow citizens social, economic and political justice, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, and equality of status and opportunity[29]. Through successive Five Year Plans of development the country has been striving to realize these basic ideals, in which process education is viewed as one of the main agencies for securing to the individual, opportunities for growth and to the society, the human resources of skills and attitudes needed for raising standards of living, and of life. The aim of educational development in India is to broaden access to education and thus ensure equality of opportunity; to evolve a national system of education rooted

in the basic values of the Indian nation and suited to the needs of economic development and social reconstruction. The challenge of carrying a developing country like India on to the path of self-sustaining growth is exacting. It is further sharpened by the rate of the population growth. The following figures may give you an idea of the immense task involved. India's population which was 361 million in 1951 increased to 439 million in 1961, 548 million in 1971 and is now estimated to be not less that 600 million.

Similarly, the growing magnitude of the educational effort is reflected in the following figures. The direct, and indirect expenditure on education which was Rs. 1,143.8 million in 1950-51 increased to Rs 8,018.2 million in 1967-68 – a seven-fold increase in seventeen years.

The first four years of independence was a period of great and unforeseen difficulties for India. Consequently, not enough attention was given to the development of Education until 1951. The State Governments, however, adopted a few broad schemes of expansion and improvement during this period, and the Union (or Centre) Government, on its part, created a Ministry of Education and Scientific Research and appointed a University Education Commission under the chairmanship of the world-renowned philosopher, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, in 1948. This Commission published its report in the following year[30].

In 1951-52 India adopted the policy of planned development and the First Five Year Plan, covering the year 1951 to 1955, provided for an expenditure of Rs. 1,590. million for educational development. Its main achievements were: (1) a large expansion of primary education; (2) the appointment of a Secondary Education Commission under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanswami Mudaliar in 1952 and the publication of its report in 1953; (3) the establishment of a

University Grants Commission in 1953 and the passing of the University Grants Commission Act in 1956; and (4) the development of basic and social education[31].

The Second Five Year Plan, 1956-60, provided for an expenditure of Rs. 2,750. million for education. Its main achievements were: (1) the continuance and further expansion of the Schemes taken up in the first Plan; (2) the reorganization of Secondary Education and the establishment of the All-India Council of Secondary Education and the Directorate of Extension Programmes of Secondary Education; and (3) large-scale development of technical education[32].

The Third Five Year Plan, 1961-65, placed great emphasis on the development of primary and technical education and expanded further the Schemes launched in the first and second Five Year Plans. It provided for an expenditure of Rs. 4,180. million for general education and Rs. 1,420. million for technical education[33].

The Third Five Year Plan was followed by three Annual Plans for the years 1966, 1967, and 1968. Perhaps the most important educational event in India during this period was the publication on June 29, 1966, of the Report of the Education Commission, which was set up in October 1964, under the chairmanship of an eminent Indian scientist, Dr. D. S. Kothari, to advise the Government of India on a national pattern and development of Education. This weighty and impressive volume[34] of 692 pages containing some 230 major recommendations is a unique educational document in some ways. For the first time in the history of Education in India, this report dealt with all aspects and sectors of education in India in a comprehensive manner[35].

It is generally achnowledged by all that the modern world is science and technology based, and this, more than anything else, has made education, as never before, a most important element in the life and progress of a nation. Economic development, welfare, and security are all closely dependent on the extent and quality of education. Knowledge and survival now literally go together. This, in a broad sense, is the central theme of the Kothari Commission Report on Education and National Development[36]. It has urged that by 1986 illiteracy should be nearly completely eradicated as a step vital to industrialization and development of agriculture. The Report has laid special stress on the pursuit of quality and excellence in Education at all levels and in all sectors, whether it be the education of a scholar or of an artisan, of a scientist or of a farmer. It has recommended a several-fold expansion of enrolment till 1986, in agriculture and engineering and postgraduate Courses in Science subjects. The following are some of the other key ideas emphasized in this Report:

1) Introducation of work experience and social service as an integral part of general education at all levels, more or less. Work experience can take various forms, the essential element being productive activity, which involves manual skill on farms, in work-shops and factories or organized in schools and colleges;
2) Stress on moral education and inculcation of a sense of social responsibility;
3) Schools should recognize their responsibility in facilitating the transition of youth from the world of school to the world of work and life;

4) Vocationalization of secondary education;

5) Strengthening of the "centres of advanced study" and the setting up of "clusters" of centers;

6) Special emphasis on the training and quality of teachers for schools;

7) Education for agriculture and research in agriculture and allied sciences should be given a higher priority in the scheme of educational reconstruction;

8) Development of quality and pace-setting institutions at all stages of education; and

9) Autonomy to outstanding colleges in the construction of Courses, and evaluation of students' performance[37].

Educational reconstrucation needs ideas, but these generally are not in short supply in India. What is usually missing is, will, determination, dedication, identification of priorities, concentration of effort and provision of adequate resources exceeding a certain critical size, and an appreciation of the many arduous steps and difficulties in transforming ideas into action at the ground level.

The Kothari Commission Report was widely discussed by all types of professional and other concerned people in India for about two years and out of the consensus of opinion emerging therefrom, the Government of India formulated a National Policy on Education, and issued it in the form of a Resolution on July 24, 1968[38]. The aim of the National Policy on Education was presented as follows:

> "The Government of India is convinced that a radical reconstruction of education on the broad lines recommended by the Education Commission is essential for economic and cultural development of the country, for national integration and for realizing the ideal of a socialistic pattern of society. This will involve a transformation of the system to relate it more closely to the life of the people, a continuous effort to expand educational opportunity; a sustained and intensive effort to raise the quality of education at all stages; an emphasis on the development of science and technology and the cultivation of moral and social values. The educational system must produce young men and women of character and ability committed to national service and development. Only then will education be able to play its vital role in national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture, and strengthening national integration." 39

The principal recommendations of the Kothari Commission Report and the Government of India Resolution on National Policy on Education just mentioned, provided the framework for the formulation of policies and programmes pertaining to Education in the Fourth Five Year Plan which was launched in 1969[40]. The official document on the "Fourth Five Year Plan, 1969-74" readily recognized most of the shortcomings of the kind of education that prevailed in the country and, as a result, proposed the following course of action: priority to the expansion of elementary education; provision of facilities for backward areas and communities, and for girls' education; expansion and improvement of science education and teachers' training; improvement of standards of post-graduate

education and research; development of Indian languages and book production, especially, production of textbooks; the consolidation of technical education and its closer linking with the needs of industry and its orientation towards self-employment; the development of youth services; and greater use of modern educational technologies. An outlay of Rs. 8,227 million was earmarked for the achievement of the above mentioned programmes. As far as education is concerned, the Fourth Five Year Plan was not an unqualified success; this is evident from the objectives set out for Education in the Fifth five Year Plan which we shall presently discuss.

During the last 25 years India has had the experience of four Five Year Plans and three Annual Plans. The Fifth Five Year Plan covering the years 1974 to 1979 is now in operation. Proposals and programmes for the advancement of Education at all stages and in all aspects formed an essential part of all these Plans. It is especially so in the case of the current Plan, which has set the following main targets as its achievement goals by 1979: (1) free and compulsory education up to the age of 14; (2) improved status, emoluments and education of teachers; (3) further development of the official language as well as the regional languages; (4) equalization of education in Science and Research; (5) development of education for agriculture and industry; (6) improvement in the quality and production of inexpensive textbooks; and (7) investment of 6 per cent of the national income in Education[41].

I think we have now reached a point where we should pause and ask the question, "What has been the contribution of all these planned activities to the progress of education and development in India?" By all accounts, the first and foremost achievement of planned development in Education in the

the post-colonial period in India is the tremendous expansion of educational facilities at all stages and in all sectors. For instance, enrolment in classes I to V has increased from 14.1 million in 1947 to 68.6 million in 1973, the latest year for which statistics are available. (It is only a five-fold increase, roughly). Similarly, in classes VI to VIII enrolment has increased even faster, from 2 million in 1947 to 18.1 million (a nine-fold increase) in 1973. At the Secondary and University stages, the expansion of facilities has been even more rapid. Enrolment in classes IX to XI increased from 850,000 in 1947 to 9.7 million in 1973 and at the University stage enrolment in all Faculties increased from 256,000 in 1947 to 3.2 million in 1973[42].

Although these achievements, in quantitative terms, may seem quite spectacular, a careful analysis of these figures, with particular reference to the national aims and objectives India has set out for itself, will reveal the weaknesses underlying such expansions under the aegis of planned development. For instance, in accordance with Article 45 of the Constitution of India, free and compulsory education should have been provided for all children between the ages of 6 and 14 by 1960. Fourteen years after the expiry of this stipulated period, India is still far away from the attainment of that goal. Today, there are still, several million boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14 in India who have not had the benefit of any schooling[43]. I would, however, readily admit that providing free, compulsory primary and middle school education, for all these millions of children is not an easy task for any Government.

The disproportionate expansion of education at the Secondary and the University stages brings out another serious defect of planned development.

To repeat the figures cited a while ago, the enrolment in classes IX to XI for the age group 14 to 17 rose from 850,000 in 1947 to 9.7 million in 1973. This means that the number of students in Secondary Schools today is more than eleven times what it was at the time of India's independence, whereas the increase at the primary level, you may recall, is a little less than five times, for the same period. In higher education, as the figures cited earlier indicate, the rise has been even more spectacular. The enrolment at this level has multiplied itself twelve and one-half times over, during a period of 26 years. This is a staggering rate of expansion in higher education in a developing country which has not yet been able to provide even five years of primary education for all its children of school going age[44].

Even more distressing is the slow rate of growth in mass literacy which has increased from 13 per cent at the time of Independence to only 30 per cent at the time of the last cenus in 1971. Even though the percentage of literacy for the country as a whole has more than doubled during this period, there has been an increase in the absolute number of illiterates in the country on acccount of the rate of growth in population outstripping the rate of increase in adult literacy. This incongrous situation is attributable to the very low priority accorded to the adult literacy compaign in the country. This is obviously a major weakness as it ignores the important principle that an effective and intensive programme for the liquidation of adult illiteracy is the first essential step in the regeneration of a static and tradition-bound society[45].

In spite of the shortcomings just mentioned, one may maintain that the expansion of educational facilities at all levels which the country has been able to achieve since it freed itself from the colonial rule is something laudable. Everything considered, it would seem that this expansion has been beneficial and has helped the country in creating a more evenly balanced economy and society[46].

In some other sectors, planning has made a much better contribution to the expansion of education. For instance, the expansion of facilities in technical and vocational education through the establishment of Indian Institutes of Technology, Engineering Colleges, Polytechnics and Industrial Institutes has been essentially due to planned effort and has made a significant contribution to the nation's industrial development and defence potential. The annual intake of Engineering and Technological Institutions went up from 10,000 in 1950 to 75,000 in 1968. The number of degree holding engineers is estimated to have increased from 58,000 in 1961 to 134,000 in 1969 and of engineering diploma holders from 75,000 to 198,000 during the same period.

In a similar fashion, the expansion of facilities in medical and para-medical education has made a great contribution to the improvement of the country's health services. The number of medical doctors has increased from 47,500 in 1950 to 138,000 in 1973; the number of qualified nurses registered an increase from 15,000 in 1950 to 88,000 in 1973. A doctor-population ratio of about 1:4300 was reached

by the end of the Fourth Plan in 1974.

The expansion of agricultural education which has assisted farm producation, and of teacher education which has led to an increase in the proportion of trained teachers, was also largely due to planned development.

The expansion of science education and of science departments in Universities is yet another example of fairly successful planning and so is the development of scientific and industrial research.

To a very large extent, expansion of the education of girls and of the socially and economically weaker sections of population, is also due to the efforts of planning. It is not that there have been no weaknesses in the afore-mentioned sectors. But, all in all, these may be said to be the fairly successful instances of planned development in education[47].

In comparison with these programmes of expansion, India's achievements in the qualitative improvements of education have been less impressive, but they also show the same blend of success and failure. It is not quite correct to say, as some critics of Indian Educational system like to contend, that since Independence the country's educational standards have steadily declined. It is far more objective to state that the qualitative improvement of education shows a mixed picture of light and shade - brighter in some areas and darker in others. It is true that there has been an increase in the number of sub-standard institutions and of students with sub-standard attainments.

At the same time, considerable improvements have been made in the teaching of several subjects, especially in Science and the professions. What is even more important, good institutions and first-rate students are now, more numerous and qualitatively as good as ever, if not better[48].

None the less, any observer of the Indian educational scene can notice that in all the past Five Year Plans, programmes of qualitative improvement received only a low order of priority and a small allocation of funds. If the determination of proper priorities is the essence of educational planning, this comparative neglect of quality should be regarded as a major weakness. But it has to be kept in mind that planning for quality is totally different from planning for quantity and that it makes far more demands on human effort and ingenuity than fiscal or material resources.

It was stated earlier that the development of education in post-colonial period in India has its gains as well as its losses. Its outstanding achievements and some of its drawbacks have been briefly described already. The picture would not, however, be complete unless a reference is also made to its main failures. On account of the paucity of time, I shall merely list them as follows:

1) The progress of education in the post independence period has not been adequate from the point of view of national aspirations.

2) The main defects of the national system of education which were already noticeable during the colonial regime, still continue to dominate the system.

3) The prevailing system of education has not been able to contribute effectively to the economic needs of the nation. The growing spectre of educated unemployment does not bode well for the future of the nation.

4) The failure to reorientate the educational system to the requirements of the national aims and objectives and of the new social order which the country has decided to create through peaceful democratic processes[49].

It is encouraging to note that in the preparation of the Fifth Five Year Plan which was launched a year ago great care has been taken to avoid the many mistakes and failures of the past. An attempt has been made to place the priorities where they belong. Three cardinal features of the new programme may be highlighted here. The first, is the emphasis on the transformation of the educational system so as to relate it to the life, needs, and aspirations of the common people and to build up a truly democratic, secular, and socialist society. The second, is the priority given to the qualitative improvement of education so that the standards achieved may be adequate for social and economic needs and help in improving productivity. The third, is the will and determination displayed for the fulfilment of the constitutional directive for universal primary education and the expansion of facilities at other stages broadly in relation to manpower needs. Several concrete proposals have been worked out for the implementation of these vital programmes[50].

The tasks of educational development in a country of the size, complexities, and problems of India are as difficult as the are challenging. Much has been accomplished in the field of education during the short twenty seven years of the post-colonial period and, yet, much remains to be done.

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